

# Washington State Patrol Media Release

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**\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\***

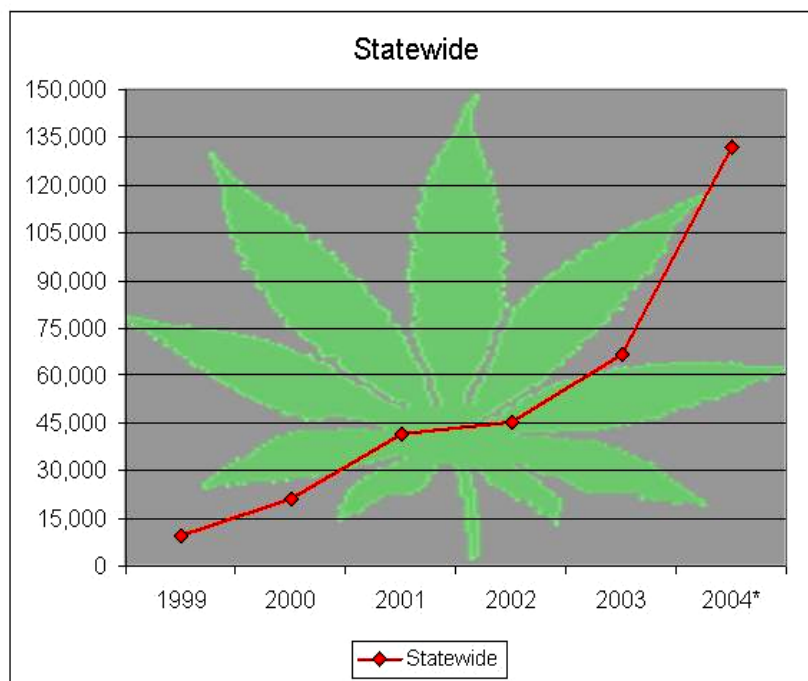
**Date: January 6, 2005**  
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## "Marijuana Eradication Up for 6<sup>th</sup> Consecutive Year"

The number of Marijuana plants seized in Washington has hit a record high this year at 131,646 plants. This is the 6th year in a row that record numbers have been removed statewide and is a 103 percent increase over last year. The Washington State Patrol (WSP) and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) oversee the Domestic Cannabis Eradication/Suppression Program (DCE/SP) which is tasked with removing domestically grown marijuana throughout the state. The program targets both indoor and outdoor grown marijuana and those who grow it. Law enforcement made 362 arrests and recovered 472 weapons during eradication efforts in 2004.

Year	Statewide
1999	9,930
2000	21,423
2001	41,449
2002	45,438
2003	66,806
2004*	131,902

NC=Data not compiled  
\*As of November 30, 2004



The Domestic Cannabis Eradication/Suppression Program grant provides primarily overtime monies and equipment to select counties throughout the state to conduct eradication efforts. City, County, state and federal officers frequently utilize DEA and National Guard helicopters to fly in likely growing areas to spot

grows. Units on the ground conduct follow-up investigation making arrests when possible and removing the plants for destruction.

This year saw large quantities of marijuana being grown on public lands across the state. Grows are sometimes tens of thousands of plants in size. Often public lands are devastated by the clearing of trees, terracing of the land, and diversion of natural springs and creeks to water plants.

Many of the large grows are very sophisticated in nature and produce high quality marijuana, which ends up being sold in our local communities. Delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) levels, which are responsible for the potency and effects of Marijuana intoxication, are increasing. Marijuana in the 1960's averaged between 1 and 3 percent THC content. THC levels in recent years routinely range between 10 and 25 percent.

The use of drugs has long been associated with other criminal behavior. The Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) study asks for voluntary, anonymous, urine samples from arrestees being booked into jails around the country to test for illegal drug use. Seattle and Spokane were the two participating cities in 2003 within Washington State. The study tests for cocaine, marijuana, methamphetamine, opiates, and PCP. In Seattle 37.2 percent and Spokane 43.6 percent of arrestees tested positive for Marijuana. In Seattle 67.3 percent and Spokane 69.5 percent of arrestees tested positive for at least one of the 5 drugs tested for.

Troopers trained as Drug Recognition Experts continue to find Marijuana as the primary cause of impairment among drivers tested. Thirty-five percent of DUI arrests for drug impairment involve Marijuana.

Anti-drug efforts to educate teens and parents about the harms of Marijuana and other drugs continue to have a positive impact on youth attitudes and drug trends. A recent survey shows a decline in teen Marijuana use as awareness about its risks increases. Between 2002 and 2003 there was a 5 percent decline in use among 12 to 17 year olds. Use by 12 to 13 year olds saw a 30 percent decrease. The percentage of youth who associated a great risk with marijuana use increase 8 percent.

The WSP maintains a hotline where tips reference marijuana grows can be given to law enforcement. Citizens can remain anonymous and be paid up to \$5,000 dollars depending on the number of plants discovered. The hotline number is 1-800-388-GROW. For more information about the marijuana hotline program, please contact Lieutenant Richard A. Wiley, Narcotics Section at (509) 353-2964 or (360) 507-0453.

Law enforcement throughout Washington continues to do an outstanding job with the resources and support of DEA to address the domestic production of Marijuana in Washington State.

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